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of Engineers**

Walla Walla District
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Contact:
Nola Conway

Phone: (509) 527-7020

Corps employees receive recognition at awards ceremony

Walla Walla, Wash., -- Lt. Col. Richard Wagenaar, commander of the Walla Walla District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, presented several awards to the civilian staff on Friday, June 21.

The District staff is responsible for the development of federal water resources in a 107,000-square-mile region. The District's boundaries generally follow the Snake River drainage in six states – Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Nevada, Utah, and Wyoming. The Walla Walla District is one of five in the Corps' Northwestern Division, located in Portland, Oregon.

The 650-member District staff is active in the planning, design, construction, operation and maintenance of water resources projects for flood control, navigation and other purposes. The District also provides regulatory oversight to the state of Idaho.

Al Hokanson, a retired supervisory mechanical engineer, was selected to join the Walla Walla District's Gallery of Distinguished Civilian Employees.

Hokanson began his career with the Corps in the Portland District construction office in 1963. Al started with the Walla Walla District in 1968 at Dworshak Dam. He retired in January 1996 as a supervisory mechanical engineer with 32 years of exemplary federal service.

Hokanson distinguished himself during his long career by mentoring many engineers that are supervisors or technical experts in the Corps. He was also a dive inspector and supervised more than 300 dive contracts with no lost time accidents. Though water temperatures ranged from 34 degrees and conditions that were adverse, Hokanson's focus on safety is credited for completing the diving contracts without incident.

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Public Affairs Office, Walla Walla District Headquarters, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 201 N. Third Ave, Walla Walla, WA 99362-1876
Phone (509) 527-7020 FAX (509) 527-7824 CELL (509) 520-1468
Web site: www.nww.usace.army.mil E-mail: cenww-pa@usace.army.mil

CORPS EMPLOYEES RECOGNIZED/2-2-2

Receiving achievement medals for civilian service were: Sharon White and Nancy Head.

White, the executive assistant for the district, was recognized for her role in planning and executing a successful strategic conference for the Walla Walla District that was held in Spokane in May.

Head, lead timekeeper for the Walla Walla District, was recognized for her management of the program that provided an essential service to the district and employees. She was especially recognized for her ability to quickly fix pay problems that affected employees.

Shawn Bothum a member of the maintenance mechanical crew at McNary Dam was recognized with an outstanding achievement award for his ability to plan, organize and execute tasks, excelling in achieving results.

The Engineering Excellence Award was presented to Brian Miller, chief of the Mechanical Design Section in Engineering. Miller's exceptional technical skills, combined with his computer and people skills, exemplifies engineering excellence.

Mona Wright, District Archaeologist, received an award for outstanding achievement for her exceptional performance in support of the cultural resources program. She was especially recognized for demonstrating a high level of personal courage and conviction in promoting the importance of protecting cultural resources and maintaining a viable and credible program.

Graduates of the District's leadership development program were also recognized at the award ceremony. Participants in the program include: Douglas Cruz, Joseph Fisk, Michael Swenson, Russell Heaton, Michael Halter, Carl Knaak, Robert Lustig, Viktoria Milhauser, Craig Newcomb, Paul Ocker and Lisa Rodighiero.

Commander coins went to Ernie Rogers of Engineering Division, and Greg Steindorf, Michael Baird and Gerald Mattis, contractors with Information Management.

Michael Deitrick, a park ranger at Dworshak Dam, was selected as employee of the quarter.